

THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cowper.*



JACKO ANNOUNCES THE MARCH OF THE LAND CRABS.

THE CAPTAIN'S STORY:

OR, ADVENTURES IN JAMAICA THIRTY YEARS AGO.

CHAPTER XX.—THE MARCH OF THE LAND CRABS.

We were still talking over the feats of strength we had just witnessed, and little Mac's distress at the bushier's defeat was fast merging into admiration for his conqueror, when shouts were heard in the direction of the negro huts, which were situated

about midway between us and "the bush," and not above a couple of hundred yards from where we stood.

"What now?" said the bushier.

We listened more attentively; the noise increased. What could be the cause? No one seemed to know. Presently a strange object was seen flitting towards us through the moonlit fields. It drew nearer; no sound of advancing footsteps could I hear, and

yet it was close upon us, running swiftly under the shadow of the buildings; it looked like a pair of white trousers scampering along by themselves. What could it be?"

Now it has bounded over the low garden wall, and I hear the patter of feet, and I see teeth gleaming and eyes rolling. The mystery was solved. A negro, *in puris naturalibus*, saving and except the aforesaid white trousers, stood before us.

"Hoot awa', John! are ye clean daft, that ye rin through the country this gait, and ye half naked? 'Deed, I thought your brecks had rin awa' by theirsells—the colour o' your skin matches the nicht, ye ken—what is it, man alive? speak, gin ye've no rin your tongue out o' your heed!"

"De crab, massa!" burst from the open mouth of the panting John; "de crab come ebrywhere—tousan' and tousan' ob'em; dey cubber ebry ting; de groun', de cabin, de tree, all cubber wid crab."

"Crabs, that's grand! cried the bushier; "gentlemen, ye're in luck; I've been fifteen years on the island and never seen but one march of the land crabs; it's a strange sight, and many live and die in Jamaica without seeing it: come along, ye'll no regret the trouble, my word for it; ye'll no regret the trouble."

"Trouble! the trouble's a pleasure; lead on, Macduff," said Rington; "I've never seen the march of the land-crabs though I've been in Jamaiky pretty nearly as long as yourself, Gordon: why, it must beat the march of the Cameron men all to nothing."

Mr. Gordon vouchsafed no reply to this disparaging comparison, but he stalked forth majestically into the adjoining fields. We followed eagerly; for, though we had all heard accounts of this wonderful march, we had none of us ever witnessed it. The story went that the crabs in their progress never got out of the way of anything; little or big, whatever the obstacle, a house or a river, over it or through it they pursued their undeviating course; to go round any object, however slightly the *détour*, was contrary to crab law. To say the truth, I had always regarded this as a pleasant delusion, an ingenious fable, and now I was about to test the correctness of the description.

The negro huts were dotted about here and there on the slope of the hill, with gardens in front and the bush in the rear. On the extreme left three huts stood close together; two of them actually touched, but there was a division of a few yards wide between the centre hut and its neighbour to the right.

It was towards this point that John, who had hustled on in front, hastened his dusky steps. But indeed, we should have made for the same place without his guidance, for from thence proceeded a Babel of sounds which beggars description. The whole negro population of Smiling Valley seemed to be collected around those three huts—men, women, and children—shouting, laughing, screaming, scrambling, tumbling about in all directions, and keeping up an incessant chatter the whole time, which would certainly have silenced a troop of monkeys had they been there to venture into competition with this human hubbub.

As I was watching this extraordinary scene, advancing the while towards the huts, I trod upon something hard and slippery, which nearly threw me down; I looked on the ground: a moving mass of dark shapeless creatures were at my feet.

"Look at the huts!" cried the bushier; "eh! but there's a good few o' the pair beasties!"

A good few! Never before had I seen such a sight, and never again do I expect to see such another. The huts were covered with crabs; over the roof and down the wall they swarmed in countless numbers. The broad leaves of the tree fern, which thatched the huts, crackled under the incessant pattering of their hard claws.

"Come to the rear, come to the rear! ye'll see them loupin' an' linkin' up the hoose!" shouted Gordon, in a great state of excitement.

Away we all hurried; but that beat anything we had seen yet; for the negroes were all in front of the huts, loading themselves with their scaly booty; and we had an uninterrupted view of the advancing host. The bush came down the slope at that point to within about 150 yards of the huts; a meadow lay in front of the wood, reaching up to the back of the huts, from which it was separated by a low stone wall.

Out of that wood, across that field, over the stone wall, and up the sides of the huts, streamed the crabs. Slowly and unceasingly they advanced in a straight line, about thirty or forty feet in breadth. The night was as light almost as day, the moon was high in the heavens, and we could see the advance of these extraordinary animals perfectly.

And now I had an opportunity of removing all doubts touching the dogged directness of their march. First and foremost, I observed that they mounted the wall at the point they struck it, without any reference to a large gap which there was about three feet from the outside edge of their line. Not one crab did I see go through that gap. But the most conclusive evidence of their notion, as to the best method of marching through the country, was to be found at the huts.

These three huts happened to be exactly in their line, and, as a matter of course, up and over they went. But the reader will please to remember that there was a division between two of the huts, a path of several yards wide; down that path the crabs poured, but only those which struck the mouth of the opening as they advanced. There was no hustling, no jostling to get into the path, no attempt to avoid the wall of the house, no turning aside, no, not the width of an inch to the right or to the left. They swarmed through the opening, and they swarmed up the face of the hut with a solemn, undeviating perseverance which it made one laugh to look at. Obstacles were of no account; short cuts they utterly ignored. But what are these streaks of pale green glittering in the moonlight, which appear and disappear upon the roof of that hut, like mimic flashes of lightning? There it is again! what are they?

"Hi massa! hi massa! looke dere sa'—see de snake how he yam yam (eat) de crab! how he 'waller massa crab; hi! dere go nudder," shouted the nigger John, as he capered by my side.

"So they are," said Rington, "those things are snakes; I couldn't make them out; look, look how they dash after the crabs."

A fresh interest was instantly awakened in the negro mind at the cry of John; handfuls of crabs were dropped by many an eager gatherer, and a rush was made to look at the snakes.

The hubbub also received a fresh impetus from these new arrivals; if it were astounding before, it was deafening now. A new element appeared amidst the clamour and confusion—so at least it seemed to me—the element of discord.

A burly black was forcing his way through the narrow opening between the houses, regardless alike of crabs and men, trampling on the former, and rudely shoving the latter; for the snakes alone filled his mind, to the exclusion of all other objects.

"Hi!" cried one of the shoved, "war you g'win, Cuffy—what for you pushe me dis time? 'tan back yerself." So saying, he pushed the pusher.

Upon which Cuffy caught hold of the two nearest negroes and shouted out: "What for you 'trike me, you Dando, you black nigger? lebe me go, (this to the men he was holding,) lebe me go."

Upon which he struggled furiously, and the men, taking the hint, did hold him.

"Ho, ho!" cried his opponent contemptuously, "lebe de gen'leman 'lone, him berry tame nigger; why you hold dat 'pick up' lang shor' Corraman'le nigger? he all talke, talke—lebe poor Cuffy go."

No sooner said than done; and the liberated Cuffy, with rolling eyes and foaming mouth, dashed at his taunting adversary, who, nothing loth, closed with him instantly. Fury gleamed in their eyes—yells of rage burst from their lips—they buried their hands in each other's wool, and tugged and twisted till I thought one or the other must have had his neck broken.

I looked at the busher. "Surely," I thought, "he will put a stop to this." He caught my eye and smiled.

"Hand your din there," he called out, "and come you here, you Cuffy—look sharp, now."

To my astonishment the combatants separated instantly, made hideous faces at each other, and, bursting into the most vociferous shouts of genuine laughter, they both hurried towards the busher.

So, after all, this was a farce, not a fight! All that rage and wrenching was but a piece of inimitable acting. Don't tell me, after this, that negroes are an inferior race, a link between the man and the monkey; how monkeys can act I don't know, but I am certain that neither Siddons nor Kean ever equalled Cuffy and Dando on the tragic stage.

Meanwhile, on crawled the crabs; regardless alike of human hands and serpents' jaws they pursued their way. Most animals when attacked endeavour to escape; the English crabs certainly do so, for many a time have I vainly endeavoured to capture one on the sea-shore as he "scuttled" away under the rocks. But the land crab of Jamaica is superior to this weakness; he will no more turn aside from danger and death than he will turn aside from a house; they are alike obstacles of no moment when on his march; go a-head he will, and go a-head he does

too. Hundreds were taken, many were trampled to death, and many were swallowed by the snakes; but thousands escaped, or, I should say, passed on unscathed and unstopped towards their goal, the sea-shore, from whence, after spawning in the sand, they retraced their footsteps to the woods and mountains. Their children, when sufficiently grown, follow their parents to their mountain homes. It is a curious bit of natural history, but it is no less strange than true.

After seeing several snakes killed, one of them measuring upwards of twelve feet, I turned my attention once more to the crab collectors. It was easy to catch them, but not so easy to hold them, for they still would try to "keep moving," and continually escaped from the skirts of the women's dresses into which they were tossed. But the most laughable sight was the eager scrambling of the "piccaninies," of whom there were a dozen or more on the ground, their little round black bodies shining in the moonlight as they tumbled and toddled about. How gleefully they crowed forth their delight when they succeeded in catching a crab, and how they screamed with affright, and dropped him like a hot potato, when he nipped their bare arms, or pinched their little plump bodies, guileless of shirt or dress. I saw one little fellow running away with his arms full of crabs, whilst two or three, which he could not hold, were scrambling down his back. He screamed lustily as he ran, but he was a plucky little fellow, and would not let go his prey; he held on his way gallantly, and I have no doubt arrived safely at home with some at least of his hard-won captives.

And now the fun was over, and the last of the crabs had disappeared in the broken ground beyond the huts.

"Well," said Jim Gordon, as we walked slowly back, "what do you think of the march of the land crabs? was it no' worth the seeing?"

We declared that, of all the singular and interesting sights we had ever witnessed, the said "march" was the most interesting and the most wonderful; and truly it was so.

The busher told us many a story that night of what he had seen in Jamaica; and, what interested us more, he gave us an account of a passage in his own life, which in the next chapter I will relate to my readers. Some talk about sharks drew from the busher his strangely exciting narrative.

VICISSITUDES OF FAMILIES.

[Continued from page 300.]

THE story of Theodore, king of Corsica, who died in 1756, immediately after leaving the King's Bench prison, is well known. We will therefore, as a pleasing contrast to the character of many other illustrious personages who have brought ruin on themselves by improvidence and misconduct, merely give Horace Walpole's testimony to the pure morality of this dethroned monarch, under the most trying circumstances.

"After comparing Theodore with James II, and giving him the preference, Walpole adds: 'The

veracity of an historian obliges me not to disguise the bad situation of his Corsican Majesty's revenue, which has reduced him to be a prisoner for debt in the King's Bench prison: and so cruelly has fortune exercised its rigours upon him, that last session of parliament he was examined before a committee of the House of Commons on the hardships to which the prisoners in that gaol had been subject. Yet, let not ill-nature make sport with these misfortunes! His Majesty had nothing to blush at, nothing to palliate in the recapitulation of his distresses. The debts on his civil list were owing to no misapplication, no improvidence of his own, no corruption of his ministers, no indulgence to favourites or mistresses. His life was philosophic, his diet humble, his robes decent; yet his butcher, his landlady, and his tailor could not continue to supply an establishment which had no demesnes to support it, no taxes to maintain it, no excises or lotteries to provide funds for its deficiencies and emergencies."

Dr. Doran, in his "Monarchs retired from Business," tells the story of the son of King Theodore once dining at Dolly's with Count Poniatowski, when neither the son of the late king of Corsica, nor he who was the future king of Poland, had enough between them to discharge their reckoning. Distress drove the former to suicide. He left a daughter who was married to a Mr. Clark, and one of the four children of this marriage was established in London at the beginning of this century, where she earned a modest livelihood as an authoress and an artist. Her card ran thus:—

"MISS CLARK,

Grand-daughter of the late Colonel Frederick, son of Theodore, King of Corsica,

PAINTS LIKENESSES IN MINIATURE,

From two to three Guineas.

No. 116, NEW BOND STREET.

Hours of Attendance from twelve in the morning until four."

The decadence of the O'NEILLS, kings of Ireland, ran through many centuries. It commenced in the year 987. Murtoch O'Neill, who closed his reign and his life in 1168, was the last monarch of the race whose posterity had thus exclusively, according to Irish records and Mr. Moore's history, occupied the throne of Ireland for upwards of six hundred years. These O'Neills are conspicuous from the beginning in the Irish wars, particularly those waged in the time of Elizabeth and Cromwell. The following passage gives a touching picture of the state of penury to which the last but one of the Clanaboy branch of this family was reduced, before it became finally extinct.

"Retiring into the village of Slane, Sir Francis O'Neill, sixth baronet, the descendant of a race of the kings, representative of the dashing dragoon of Edge Hill, and the cousin of three peers, Mornington, Dunsany, and Meath, rents a cabin of four apartments, and keeps in it a small huckster's shop and dairy, the produce of two cows, while his two horses and carts, last remnant of his stock, attended by his second son, John O'Neill, cart flour for hire from the mills of Slane to Dublin. In that humble cabin the aged and poverty-stricken baronet was

visited in the month of May, 1798, by John, the first Viscount O'Neill, and his two sons Charles and John, the late earl and the last viscount, on their way to Shane's Castle; for John, the first Lord O'Neill, princely in mind as he was exalted in station, never turned his face from a poor relation. On that occasion Sir Francis O'Neill took a melancholy pleasure in showing to his lordship the last remnant of his family plate, a silver cream ewer and tablespoon, engraven with his crest, the hand and dagger, also the patent of baronetcy, with its large old-fashioned wax seal, and his parchment pedigree, tracing his descent from the prince school-master, Niul of Scythia and Egypt. And in a little outhouse or shed, open at three sides, in that humble yard, he also pointed out his broken carriage, emblazoned with his arms, *the red hand* of O'Neill, which was almost effaced and illegible from exposure to wind and rain. Fit emblem it was of the broken fortunes of his house. The noble viscount did not live to fulfil the promise he then made to better the condition of this reduced gentleman of his house, for in a short month afterwards he was in his grave—barbarously and treacherously murdered at Antrim by the rebels of Killead. Sir Francis O'Neill himself, shocked by the event, and by the feeling that the last reed on which he depended was broken, soon followed, and in the year 1799 was placed beside his father, Sir Henry, in the grave inside the ruins of the old church of Mount Newton. In a year and a half after, his wife, the Lady O'Neill, was laid by his side."

The son of this Sir Francis O'Neill is yet living. He has had an eventful life. He enlisted at about eighteen years of age in the English army, has seen much service in Portugal, Spain, and France, and was discharged as serjeant-major of the 88th regiment, with a pension of two shillings and twopence a day, in 1830. In that year "he was appointed by the corporation of the city of Dublin chief officer of the Newgate guard—a quaint-looking corps, dressed up in costume not unlike the Royal Artillery, who required a strict disciplinarian like Serjeant-Major O'Neill to preside over them. He was discontinued in this office at the break-up of the guard in 1836, when he took two houses in Cook Street, Dublin, in one of which, number 95, he now resides, with his eldest son, Francis O'Neill, a coffin maker."

Mr. Burke gives the following account of the downfall of the UMFRAVILLES:—

"A high and potent family were the UMFRAVILLES of Northumberland, men of the strong hand and the stout heart—qualities which in the old time gave men the mastery over their fellow creatures. The patriarch of their race, 'Robert with the beard,' lord of Tours and Viex, like so many others of his fortunate countrymen, accompanied William the Conqueror in his expedition upon England; and, like them, too, reaped an ample portion of the general plunder. Ten years after the battle of Hastings, he obtained from his royal master a grant of the Valley of Redesdale, in Northumberland, with all its castles, woods, and franchises, to hold of him and his heirs for ever by the service of defending that part of the country from wolves

and the king's enemies, by 'the sword which the said King William wore at his side when he entered Northumberland, and which he gave to the said Robert.' But, alas for the instability of all human greatness! this illustrious family, dignified with the titles of baron and earl, was on its wane ere the Russells had yet risen into importance upon the spoils of the church. The last but one of their male descendants in the direct line kept a chandler's shop at Newcastle, but, failing in this humble occupation, he was glad to accept the office of keeper of St. Nicholas' workhouse, in the same town, where he died, and left his widow with a son and daughter utterly destitute. Fortune, however, at this dark moment, before turning her face from them for ever, shed a passing gleam upon their extinction. Their sad story came to the ears of the Duke of Northumberland, who generously allowed a small pension to the widow, and, after educating her son, procured for him a midshipman's appointment. In due course of time, John Umfraville rose to the rank of captain; but he left no issue, and with him expired the illustrious race of Umfraville.

"By a yet greater declension, the last of the Conyers, a race at one time so celebrated, ended his days in a workhouse; the noble blood of the Rokebys in Yorkshire ebbed out with a carpenter during the last century; and at the beginning of the present, the heir of the eminent and ancient family of CASTLETON, and the twelfth baronet of the name in succession, was a breeches-maker at Lynn, in Norfolk. The 'Universal Magazine,' of 1810, thus records his decease:—

"Died at Lynn, aged fifty-eight, Mr. Edward Castleton. He was the last lineal descendant of Sir William Castleton, of Hingham, Norfolk, who was created a baronet in 1641: the family and title are therefore now become extinct. He died a bachelor, and never assumed the baronetcy. He for many years followed the very humble employment of breeches-maker in Lynn, but latterly lived on a small patrimonial inheritance."

The last example Mr. Burke gives of the "vicissitudes of families" is the most striking of them all, that of the PALAEOLOGI—"the illustrious race so honourably commemorated by Gibbon, which furnished eight emperors to Constantinople, and were the last of ten dynasties, exclusive of the Franks, that reigned over the Greek Empire.

"Mighty indeed were these Palaologi; mighty in power, dignity, and renown: yet, within less than two centuries from the heroic death of the Emperor Constantine, their direct descendant, Theodore Palaologus was resident, unnoticed and altogether undistinguished, in a remote parish on the Tamar, in Cornwall.

"This parish was Landulph, about two miles from Saltash, a locality already associated with the Courtenays, another family of Byzantine celebrity. The ancient church of Landulph has many curious memorials; but there is one monumental brass of surpassing interest, inscribed with the name and genealogy of the last of the rulers of Constantinople. This inscription is surmounted by the imperial arms of the Greek empire.

"Of Theodore's sons, the eldest, named after his

father, was at one time a lieutenant in Lord St. John's regiment, and died without issue; the second, John, fell at Naseby, fighting under the royal banner; and the third, Ferdinando, escaped after that same disastrous fight, in which he was also engaged *ex parte regis*, to the island of Barbadoes, where he inherited an estate from his grandfather, Bales, and where he married and settled, calling his distant home 'Clifton Hall,' in remembrance of his native Landulph. There he closed his life in 1678, leaving an only son, Theodore Palaologus, who died soon after, young and unmarried. Thus expired the male line of the Palaologi. But many a long year after, so late as the last war of independence in Greece, a deputation was appointed by the provisional government to inquire whether any of the family of Palaologus existed. This deputation proceeded to Italy, and various countries, where the Palaologi had become refugees, and, amongst other places, to Landulph; but, as I have shown, no male Palaologus existed, or else the descendant of Theodore, the humble resident of the Cornish village, might have ascended the restored throne of Greece."

SEEKING WORK.

The necessity of seeking employment is one which is pretty sure to occur to every man who lives by his labour, whatever that labour may be, at some time or other. The supply of work for the worker is rarely equal to the demand, in any place, for a period of long continuance, and when it fails in one locality it has to be sought after elsewhere. The search is by no means a pleasant task, and the candidate who carries his energies into the market, and, so to speak, hawks his personal services, is apt to receive at times rather rude rebuffs, which have the effect of depressing his spirits, and rendering him in very deed that "melancholy spectacle" which political economists have described him. This ought not to be. The right and the rightness of demanding employment is admitted on all hands, and is founded on the feeling prevalent in the public mind that the industrious have a claim to it; and further, that it is to the advantage of society that they should have it. The provision made towards meeting this demand, not only in our own country but on the continent, presents one of the most interesting phases of modern civilization; but it is one that does not obtrude itself, and would have to be sought out rather closely and curiously by him who would thoroughly investigate it in all its bearings.

Both in Paris and in London there are "houses of call" for different denominations of artisans, which in the former are wine-shops or restaurants, and in the latter public-houses, where persons wanting employ may at all times be either seen or heard of. There is this difference, however, between the institutions of the two capitals: in Paris the applicants are duly registered on a list kept by the "mother of the house," who, by the way, may be, and often is, a brawny fellow with black beard and whiskers; and each candidate is located in his turn, so that a master in want of a journeyman must take the man at the top of the list, or none;

whereas, in London, there is no such register, and the employer can take his choice of the candidates. Again, there is in the French capital another resource both for employers and employed. In certain open spots well known to those interested, men wanting employ will congregate early in the morning, where employers will seek them out and come to terms, independent of the "mother" and the register. Men whose names are low on the list will have recourse to this method to get an engagement, merely striking their names off the register when they have obtained one. In London there is nothing of this kind; and, indeed, such a plan could hardly be adopted in a London climate.

In both capitals there is a constant influx of workmen from the provinces; but, for the most part, the French provincial comes to town with a very different idea in his head from that which actuates his English compeer. The French artisan generally lives and dies a workman; he does not feel the weight of class distinctions, and is not goaded by it to scramble for a higher status. When he has saved a little money, he is seen returning to his native place, where he will buy a rood or two of land, and settle down on it for the rest of his life. The English worker, on the contrary, aims at least at becoming an employer, and if he succeeds, he sticks to the capital and prosecutes his fortunes.

The English agricultural labourers and domestic servants, ever since the period when they ceased to be serfs attached to the soil, have been hired or hireable at definite annual periods, varying in different localities. The season of a great mop or fair, the date of which may vary according to the district, or may be determined by the readiness of the staple merchandise for the market, is the season of hiring. Scenes as demoralizing as they are sometimes curious and ludicrous, may be witnessed at the autumnal statutes held in the midland counties, at most of the small market towns or villages of farming districts. We have seen the candidates handled and poked and thumbed, and "touched in the wind," like beasts at a cattle-show, by sagacious farmers in want of a much-enduring, little-exacting ploughman or carter. Nay, we have seen a cautious husbandman exploring the mouth of an expectant hedger and ditcher, though what sort of information he was seeking in the poor man's jaws is more than we can say. When the hiring is concluded, earnest-money is given; and it is the custom of spending this on the spot that leads to dissipation and immorality ere the night has closed. Some laudable efforts have been made by the country clergy, within the last few years, for the abatement or total abolition of these statute-meetings, though with what success does not appear. We remember a like endeavour to put them down, which was made in a southern county more than thirty years ago, but which failed from the opposition of those who would have benefited most by its success—the labourers themselves.

Perhaps the most curious thing connected with this subject, is the existence of that immense and apparently inexhaustible class of supernumeraries in the industrial army, who, lying *perdu* in ordi-

nary times, are sure to start into action when their services are indispensable. Such are the Welsh and Irish harvesters, who inundate the grain-growing lands just as the corn is beginning to ripen; such are the gangs of navvies, who swarm without beat of drum upon the line of a new railway contract; and such are the hordes of hop-pickers, who drop down in clouds upon the hop-gardens of Kent, when the crop is ready for gathering. The hiring of these periodical multitudes is, in the northern counties of England, an occasion of great scandal, inasmuch as it takes place generally on the Sunday afternoon, commencing soon after the close of the morning service. During the whole of the forenoon, the wild Irishmen are pouring into the towns, and assembling in the market-place; here, if the harvest be just commencing, they cut but a sorry figure, being generally more than half-starved, and ragged and dirty beyond imagination; if, however, the harvest be somewhat advanced, and they have earned a little money, they appear in better condition, and are then as riotous, quarrelsome, and disorderly, as they were before downcast and depressed. The farmers generally drive in to the hiring by two or three o'clock, and the business goes on pretty briskly until the bells begin to ring for the evening service, and in places where there is no evening service until dusk or dark. When the bargains are concluded, it is too often the case that the Sunday night is passed, up to a late hour, in drinking and fighting. The most fearful affrays sometimes take place, and it is always necessary, for the safety of the inhabitants, to have a strong force of police on the spot, or close at hand, during the Sundays of harvest. On these occasions it is the single men, notoriously, who are the rioters; the married being either kept in order by their wives, who accompany them, or refraining from the expensive and exciting drink for the sake of their families at home. On some of the farms, lying near the western coast, the same fields have been reaped by the same Irish hands for a score of years consecutively; these regular visitants are known to be mostly themselves tenants of small holdings in Ireland, where they will live all the year through upon a diet of potatoes, and pay the rent of their own land out of their earnings on those of the Englishman.

The position of the multitudes of supernumerary labourers is as sad as it is anomalous. Supposing, what we believe to be really the fact, that the majority of them are industriously disposed, and anxious to get an honest living by the labour of their hands, they really ought not to be subject to the conditions under which they exist; and the fact that they are so subject, points to a radical defect in our industrial system. How to remedy this defect is a problem which yet remains to be solved, notwithstanding all that machinery and emigration have yet done towards equalizing supply and demand in the labour market. We shall not pretend to strike the balance, but commend the matter to the grave consideration of our industrial friends, upon whose personal conduct, after all, it mainly depends whether they shall belong to the regular or the supernumerary class of workers.

THE NEW BIRD.—BALÆNICEPS REX.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CURIOSITIES OF NATURAL HISTORY."

If the reader will look at a map of Africa, he will see that the Nile is represented as flowing from sources which still remain a problem to the geographer. This difficulty, however, is more or less got over by the map draughtsman, who delicately pencils out the black line which represents the course of the river to a point where or whereabouts it ought to rise, if it behaves like other rivers. Now, just about this part of the world, which is represented by a white spot on the map, are to be found many of the most curiously-formed birds and beasts in the whole of creation.

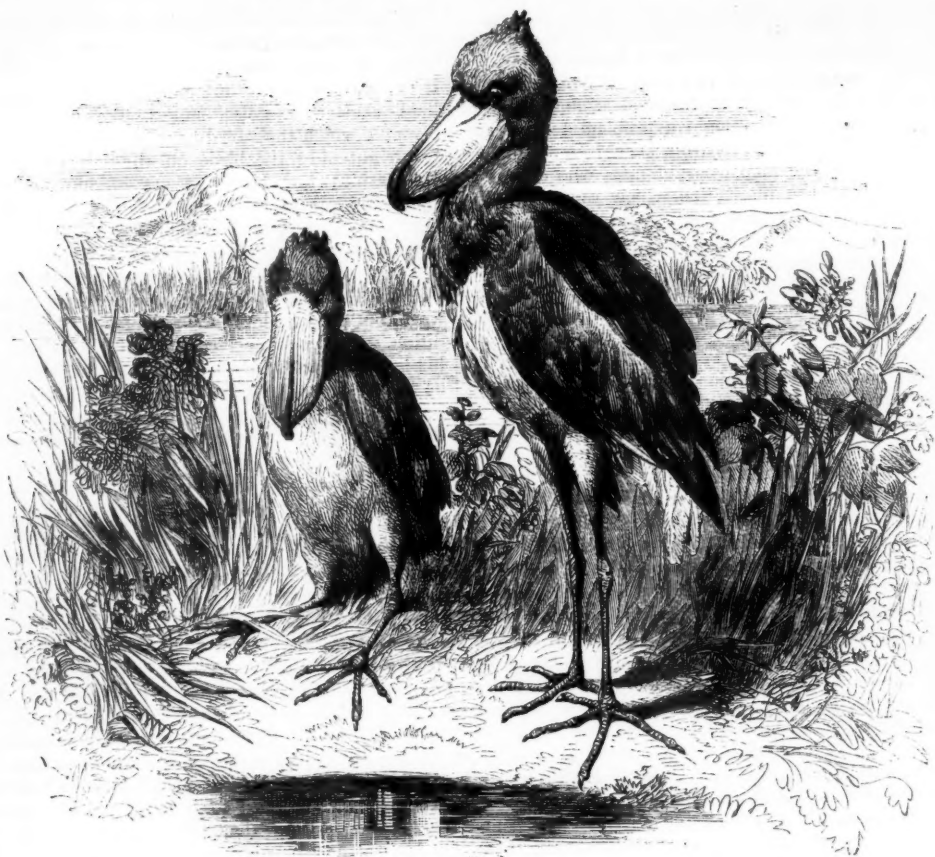
A gentleman named Petherick has lately arrived from these distant regions. He is her Majesty's vice-consul at a place called Chartoum, situated at the junction of the Blue and the White Niles, in Sudan, about fifteen hundred miles above Alexandria. This Chartoum is a large town, the capital of thirteen provinces, and contains about 60,000 inhabitants. Few Europeans find their way there, and Mr. Petherick thinks himself lucky if he sees three fresh white faces in the course of the year. Mr. Petherick makes excursions, for the sake of science and commerce, southwards from Chartoum, and has, on one occasion, got as far south as the equator, meeting in his travels some of the most curious specimens of the human family. The rainy seasons oblige him to return after a certain sojourn in these climates, but he leaves an Arab hunter or two to collect for him during his absence.

Being about to return to England, Mr. Petherick determined not to come empty-handed; he accordingly assembled at Chartoum, as travelling companions, two elephants, two rhinoceroses, four hippopotami, and nine rare birds, which he hoped to bring home with him alive to England. Out of this number of animals and birds, collected with much care and pains during his arduous explorations, three only arrived at Southampton docks, namely, one hippopotamus and two of these curious birds, the *Balænicæps rex*, which name, literally translated, means "the whale-headed king." The first specimen of this bird was brought (but not alive) to England in 1851, by Mr. Marsfield Parkyns, and submitted to our learned ornithologist Mr. Gould, who has been very happy in determining its name. I was fortunately present at the Regent's Park gardens when the present specimens arrived, and could see at a glance the meaning of the name.

When put down in the aviary, the bird at once reminded one of a stork and of a pelican (as will be seen by the accompanying engraving); of a stork by its upright, "royal" (hence the term *rex*) appearance; and of a pelican by its head. The bill, however, is not exactly like that of a pelican: it is more like a fisherman's boat turned upside down on the sea-shore, or the head of a whale. Into this great, horny, dome-shaped cavity, the lower mandible fits with almost mathematical accuracy, the line of junction being exactly of the same shape as is seen in the whalebone whale, namely, of a beautiful semi-curved graceful shape. The Arabs call this bird by a name signifying

"father of a shoe"—not quite so scientific as Mr. Gould's certainly, but expressive for all that, as the bill is like a gigantic Arab shoe. When the bird is angry, it rattles its bill and makes a curious and loud chattering noise, not unlike the wooden clappers which the "bird boys" in the country use for frightening the birds off the corn-fields. In Oxfordshire the bird-watchers accompany their rude instruments of alarm with a melodious cry of "All away, all away," which can be heard at a great distance.

Two birds alone out of five were brought home by Mr. Petherick; both were dirty and travel-worn, but nevertheless in excellent health and condition. The younger bird was quite overcome by his late fatigues by land and water; he sat down on his haunches, (see Engraving,) he refused to be set on his legs, he looked about as miserable as the "new boy" when first turned into the playground among his future schoolmates: time, however, in both cases brings changes, and Balænicæps Rex, junior, is beginning to hold up his head like his fellow bird. On the arrival of travellers, refreshment is always provided; the keeper, therefore, appeared with a number of little fish in a bucket; Balænicæps looked at them with a knowing eye, (which eye, by the way, is occasionally covered with a white curtain-like membrane,) as much as to say, "I never saw fish like you, but nevertheless I will taste you." He therefore took "one step to the front," and in a grave and king-like way caught a fish or two in his bill. They were not according to his taste, so he shook his head and great mouth, like the little boy who unexpectedly finds "bitter aloes" where he looked for "sweet stuff." Some large whiting were therefore procured; directly he saw them, Balænicæps opened his mouth and threw his head back like a young unfledged rook when expecting a dainty worm from the maternal bill. No young bird can equal our friend Balænicæps in gaping when he opens his bill; you saw a wide-gaping, red-coloured abyss, into which the hand and arm might easily be placed. Down into this abyss the fish was gulped, or rather slid, for there was plenty of room for a twenty-pound salmon to pass without a wince from the bird. During this operation the tongue was seen—a tongue that could not have been "put out" to the most learned of physicians, for it consisted of a very small finger-shaped projection, not unlike the human uvula. During the gaping process, we learned that the lower mandible was "floored," so to say, with a flexible and soft membrane, of about the substance of ordinary wash-leather. This would doubtless act as a bag, should the captured fish be too energetic in his endeavours to escape, and retain the creature much on the same principle as does the landing-net of the angler. The tip of the bill, moreover, is armed with an exceedingly strong and hard hook, so that, the fish being once inside the big bill, there is no way of escape save one, and that is down the "red lane," as the nursery authorities have it, into the bird's kitchen (his stomach) below. The birds will also eat carrion, or rather the entrails of dead animals, and they find the hook on their bill is of great service in



BALENICEPS REX.

helping them at their dainty repast, such as a dead crocodile, deer, hippopotamus, etc., which they find stranded on the banks of their haunts.

These birds, in their native home, live among the vast morasses and the deserts of high reeds which abound about latitude 4° ; they have been said to feed on tortoises; possibly they would not object to a nice little tortoise that swam past them in a fish-like manner: but their proper food is fish, and fish of a large size. The Arab "Salamah"—who nurses the young hippopotamus, and who, I believe, caught these birds, and also found the eggs, which Mr. Petherick has brought with him—testifies to their eating large fish, and large fish only. This I should think likely to be the case, for a pound of sprats would be but a small pill, a salmon "dinner for twenty persons" but a mouthful, for *Baleniceps Rex*. They will also eat water-snakes, and doubtless relish them.

A few weeks since, Mr. Petherick himself read a paper on his new birds, to a crowded meeting of the Zoological Society, Hanover Square; and I am enabled, with his permission, to add the following particulars relative to this bird. Mr. Petherick, starting on one of his hunting excursions, sailed up the White Nile, and, finding a passage from it, pushed his way up through a dense forest of reeds

till he arrived at the lake above mentioned, which the Arab hunters called Bahr-il-gazal, or the "lake of the gazelle." His passage was disputed by swarms of hippopotami and crocodiles, and it was here that he found, sleeping on the reeds, the young hippopotamus he has brought with him to the gardens. Here, too, he saw, for the first time, *Baleniceps Rex*, alive and flying about. He stated that this bird was never found on the banks of the Nile itself, as the water is too deep and the banks too high. For their fishing occupations they frequent, on the contrary, the tanks, the morasses, and the spots where shallow water is to be found. They are seen in flocks of a hundred or so together, wading about in the water. When disturbed, they fly low, and, after hovering about, settle on the highest trees. They do not, however, roost in the trees, but on the islands in the lake. It was difficult to capture the old birds alive, or to rear the young ones; so Mr. Petherick caused his men to collect the eggs during the rainy season, in July and August, when he himself was obliged to be absent.

The eggs are found in holes excavated in dry spots on the islands, etc., and as many as twelve eggs are found in one nest. These eggs he ordered to be placed under hens; he thus obtained several

specimens, which delighted to bathe and feed in an artificial pond he had made for their accommodation near the camp. The two he has brought with him were hatched in this manner, and alone survive out of twenty chicks he had at one time running about alive and well. The foster-mother, the hen, was always much astonished and puzzled at the strange habits of the ugly-faced gigantic chicks she had hatched, and seemed much distressed when they went near the water, and almost frantic when they were in it. He had a boy to look after and feed his pets, and they liked to play with the boy, running after him and rattling their gigantic bills with feigned anger. Mr. Petherick brought also some of the eggs home with him. They are white in colour, oval in shape, and not unlike the egg of the pelican. After the meeting, a discussion among the learned ornithologists took place as to whether the bird was a stork or a pelican, and good arguments were brought forward on either side. Whether stork or pelican does not much matter to the visitors to the Zoological Gardens. They should go at once to see the "whale-headed king," and they will, I am sure, back my vote of thanks to Mr. Petherick for taking so much trouble and pains to bring over this remarkable specimen of the bird family to this country.

A FORTNIGHT IN BARBARY.

GIBRALTAR and Ceuta form the two pillars—the keystones—of the Straits; and, were they both in the hands of the same power, the command of the entrance to the Mediterranean would be complete. The possession of Ceuta to a certain extent compensates to the Spaniards for the loss of Gibraltar. The two fortresses are kept up at all times on a war footing, and it is necessary for those who are not of the same nation as their respective owners to obtain permission to enter either town. Ceuta is almost equal, in its natural capabilities of defence, to compete with its rival on the opposite side of the Straits; but bad government and lack of funds render it essentially inferior. It stood in imminent danger of being captured by the French, or possibly the Moors, through the incapacity and neglect of the Spanish Junta during the time of the Peninsular war; but so disastrous a fate was averted by the decision of Sir Colin Campbell, who, on his own responsibility and against the wish of the Spaniards, sent over 500 men to defend it.

Ceuta is a very ancient place, of Phœnician origin. On the decline of the Roman empire it was occupied first by the Goths, and afterwards by the Moors, in whose hands it increased in wealth and refinement until captured by John I of Portugal, at whose death it fell to the share of the Spaniards, who have since retained it and converted it into a convict station—a kind of Spanish Botany Bay. It was from this very place that, more than 1100 years ago, the Moors, in the time of Roderic the last Gothic king, crossed over to achieve the conquest of Spain. The feud between the Spaniards and Moors continued without cessation for the next 800 years. Ill feeling, though suppressed, has never been extinguished, and but a

spark was needed to rekindle the flames of animosity which have lately blazed forth fiercely as ever.

Ceuta is most easily visited by crossing the Straits in a *felucca*, which leaves the Spanish seaport town of Algeiras every second day. On a hot day in May, 1859, before the outbreak of hostilities between Spain and Morocco, we set sail; our fellow passengers were not exactly such as we could have desired, had choice been given us, the deck being crowded with miserable-looking, half-fed convicts, chained together in pairs. The voyage, however, was short, and in a few hours we were landed on the African shore. Ceuta differs in no respect from an ordinary second-class Spanish town. The graceful black-eyed women, with flowing mantillas reaching to the waist, and fans with which they are skilled to express every passion and emotion; the gaily-dressed *majo*, with velvet breeches, embroidered leggings, and broad crimson sash; the sombre-clad ecclesiastics, with long black cloaks, and hats upwards of a yard in length, curled up at the sides; all proclaim a Spanish population. The houses with their latticed windows, and the churches with bells exposed, are characteristic of a Spanish town; while the one and only *posada* presents that utter want of all comfort peculiar to Spanish inns, and the profuse use of oil and garlic in all the cooking speaks forcibly of Spanish diet. A mimic warfare had long been going on at Ceuta, the Spaniards having been strictly confined within their boundary lines by the Moors, who took the opportunity to shoot at them the moment they stirred beyond. Consequently, it was impossible to proceed from Ceuta to Tetuan, or any other Moorish town, by land; but the journey is easily accomplished by going by sea to the mouth of the small river Martil on which Tetuan is situated, and which enters the Mediterranean about five miles from the town. A custom-house and passport-office have been built here, in an essentially European style, and the traveller is provided with a soldier, armed with his scimitar and *espingarda*, (a very long-handled gun,) as an escort, to preserve him from robbery or insult on his way to the town.

As we approached the gate of the city, we felt that now indeed we were in another continent, and not, as at Ceuta, in a transplanted European town. The Moorish arch of the gateway was before us, and there, as in times of old, sits the judge to dispense justice and settle disputes. At Tetuan resides the remnant of the people who fled thither after their expulsion from Granada, and who, it is said, still retain the title deeds of their estates, in the hopes of again returning to their native place. It is a good sample of a purely Moorish town, and is quite unaffected by European influence, either in its appearance or in the manners and customs of its inhabitants. It is beautifully situated on a rising eminence, about four miles inland, and commands a fine view of the Straits of Gibraltar and the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea in one direction, with the Spanish coast in the distance, from which "the Rock" stands out prominently. Towards the south the view is bounded by the bold outline of the Atlas range of mountains, rising crag above crag. The streets are very narrow and

tortuous, built thus with the object of affording as much shade as possible from the scorching rays of the sun. The houses, which are usually about three stories high, can boast of few architectural beauties, as they consist of plain whitewashed walls pierced by grated windows. The doorway does not at once lead into the interior, but into an inclosed courtyard or quadrangle, which acts as a ventilator for the whole house. Corridors or balconies run entirely round the court, on a line with each story of the house, and are joined together by a staircase, the doors of the different rooms entering directly into them. The courtyard, which is used as a room, much in the same way as a hall in our country houses, is paved with tiles and ornamented with luxuriant shrubs and flowering plants. In the residences of the wealthier classes a fountain stands in the centre, throwing forth its never-failing showers of crystal water, the cooling and quieting effects of which can only be appreciated by those who have lived in hot countries. The interiors are fitted up with comfort and elegance, and in many cases with magnificence; some of the houses of the richer Moors having more or less of that gorgeous style of decoration which we see brought to perfection in the Alhambra, being embellished with stucco panelling, *artesonado* (a kind of mosaic woodwork) ceilings, and the *azulejos* or earthenware tiling, for which the Moors were so celebrated. The tops of the houses, which are flat, are a general place of resort in the cool of the evening, when, after the sun has set, they become a delightful retreat. The town of Tetuan, in proportion to its size, is very populous, the actual number of its inhabitants, though variously estimated, being probably not less than 30,000, of whom 10,000 are Jews. The Jews, and any Christians who may be in the place, are made to live in a quarter of the town appropriated to them, inclosed within walls and gates.

We, in common with most European visitors to Tetuan, found comfortable accommodation at the house of a certain Jew, by name Solomon Nahon. The difference of dress and of personal appearance in the Moorish and in the Jewish quarter of the town is very marked. On first entering the town, the effect to a European is quite bewildering, from the complete novelty of the scene. In the thronged streets we distinguish rich men with loose flowing embroidered garments, and turbans on their heads, riding on powerful mules magnificently caparisoned; poor men, some wearing the white *halk*, a sort of tunic, or single garment, clothing the whole body, with a hood to cover the head; others provided only with a shirt confined round the waist with a belt; slaves with faces black as jet, carrying water and other burdens—all adding to the variety of the scene. The movements of the different passers-by are equally striking; some walking slowly, gravely, and with statuesque dignity; some hurrying along at full speed, without any apparent object, and others lying idly at the sides of the streets. Women, who usually walk together in parties of five or six, excite our compassion as well as attract our attention by their impenetrably thick veils, drawn so tightly over their faces as to suggest the idea of

a fractured skull bandaged by a surgeon's skill. Turning, with mingled feelings of pity for them and disappointment for ourselves, we recognise the aquiline nose and stooping gait of the Jew, who slowly, suspiciously, and as if always on the defensive, threads his way along the streets. His dress is quite different from that of the Moor. A long coat, usually of dark-coloured silk, reaching to the ankles, much in the style of modern dressing-gowns, and confined at the waist by a belt, a white ribbed waistcoat buttoning up to the throat, short white trousers reaching below the knee, and white stockings and shoes, with a small black skull-cap on the head, instead of the Mahomedan turban or fez, completes his attire. In the Jewish quarter of the town we for the first time see in numbers the daughters of Israel, whose beauty in these parts is proverbial. Their dress, which is very ancient in style, contrasts most favourably with that of their Moorish sisters, and is often profusely ornamented with embroidery and jewellery. On the Sabbath, more especially, costliness and magnificence of attire are displayed—even little children glittering with ear-rings, necklaces, and other adornments of gold and precious stones. We one day, by invitation, spent an evening at the house of a wealthy Jew, whose daughter, a beautiful child of three years old, appeared in a dress so resplendent, that we should have doubted its real worth and value, had not her father taken an opportunity, in the course of the evening, to assure us that she wore on her person the equivalent of £300. Nevertheless, though this case was an exception to the rule, the quantity of gold and jewellery worn by the Jewish women often gives an exaggerated idea of the wealth of the owners, who not unfrequently display their whole fortune on their persons, as it is their custom to invest their surplus capital in the purchase of trinkets and precious stones, and, when ready money is required, to sell them again. Few if any colonies of Jews now exist, who keep up so many peculiarly national customs as those in Tetuan; but, owing to the recent war, this interesting colony has been broken up, and will probably never be restored in the same integrity. Though little sympathy exists between the Jews and Moors, and though the latter exercise dominion over the former with harshness and cruelty, yet it must be borne in mind that the Moors, in their prosperous days, showed an amount of religious toleration unknown among other nations at that period. When the Spaniards succeeded in driving the Moorish invaders out of Spain, they likewise drove the Jews across the Straits to Africa, where the Moors allowed them to settle under various restrictions, but with certain privileges. At Tetuan, as before mentioned, the Jews constitute a third part of the entire population. The gates inclosing their quarter are shut every night, and also during the whole of the Jewish Sabbath, that is to say, from sunset on Friday evening till the same hour on Saturday, which time is indicated each day by the firing of a gun. The Sabbath is kept with strictest regard to the letter of the Mosaic law, no manner of work being allowed. During the afternoon of Friday, an unusual commotion is observable

in the internal arrangements of the Jewish dwellings, the inmates being busily employed in preparing not only supper for that evening, but breakfast and dinner for the next day. Whatever is to be consumed during the ensuing twenty-four hours is placed on the table at once. Immediately as the gun fires all business is suspended, and the streets become thronged with people wending their way to the numerous synagogues. We accompanied our host to his place of worship, which was small, but capable of holding about 250 or 300 people, and very plain, its only ornaments being an immense number of lamps hanging from the ceiling. The proportion of females in the congregation is very small, and they are made to sit in a gallery or some place where they are little seen. The chanting, which is very loud, would also be solemn, were it not for the nasal twang with which it is accompanied. Friday evening, after the service in the synagogues is over, is the great occasion for social family meetings—supper, as before remarked, being prepared and laid on the table before sunset.

The following morning the synagogues are again crowded, and the rest of the day till sunset is spent in walking, talking, etc.—every kind of manual labour being scrupulously avoided. Our host was most obliging in giving us advice as to where we could procure necessary food, and also directions as to the cooking thereof, though he would allow none of his household to render us any assistance. Neither would he make any charge for our maintenance during the Sabbath, though at the same time he had no scruples of conscience in suggesting to us that any little compensation we should wish to make in the way of payment might be safely deposited by us in a cupboard in the room, and the next morning he should have great pleasure in removing it. As the firing of the gun on Saturday announces sunset, once more the gates are opened and business recommences.

The construction of the houses in the Jewish quarter of the town is precisely similar to that of the Moors, but they are furnished more in European style, with tables and chairs, instead of rugs and couches. As a rule, the Jews in Morocco all speak a dialect of the Spanish language.

The bazaars in Tetuan are general places of resort, and, though inferior, are very similar to those of Constantinople. They consist of a series of covered arcades, each avenue of which is appropriated to a particular branch of commerce: The articles offered for sale are of great variety; one of the largest and the most attractive departments is that occupied by the embroiderers, whose wares glitter with gold. The drug market used at one time to be celebrated, but has now fallen into disrepute. The shops or stalls are of very small size; there the owner sits cross-legged in the midst of his wares. We found the Jews disagreeably pressing in their endeavours to make us buy, whilst the Moors, on the contrary, seemed to think it a favour to entertain an idea of selling anything to a Christian. He who imagines he will find anything like "fixed prices" in these bazaars will be sorely disappointed, the sums demanded being often twice or three times as much as are willingly received.

The public buildings in Tetuan, which consist principally of mosques, are very plain. Into these mosques it is impossible for any but the followers of Mahomet to enter; but there is as little to be seen within them as without. In front of the door is a court with a fountain in the centre, in which the Mussulman performs his ablutions before entering. Each mosque has a square tower, on the top of which, three times in the day, at sunrise, noon, and at sunset, a priest appears, and, in lieu of bells, with his own voice calls the people to pray, in such words as, "It is better to pray than to sleep." Bath-houses are numerous, and similar to those in Turkey, but no "infidels" are allowed to make use of them. Near the centre of the town is a large open square, where public amusements are held and slaves are sold by auction. The amusements are principally of three kinds, namely, music of very primitive description, snake charmers—whose curious performances never fail to attract large audiences—and jugglers.

Polygamy is allowed in the empire of Morocco, as in other Mahomedan countries; at the same time, few but the very rich Moors possess more than one wife; but anything like social family intercourse is almost unknown, owing to the degraded position in which the women are kept. The fanatical views with which the Mahomedans regard Christians prevent much being known of their private life; but we were fortunate in bearing letters of introduction to a rich Moor, high in the favour of the emperor, who had travelled sufficiently in Europe to enable him to overcome many of the prejudices of his nation, and furthermore, to acquire the Spanish and a little of the English languages. He was the owner of two houses; one, a bachelor residence in the town, the other, a country house where his wives lived. To the latter he paid us the unusual and polite attention of inviting us, to inspect his gardens and grounds, and in acceptance of his kind offer we one afternoon started on horseback. Our host came part of the way to meet us, mounted on a splendid mule in gorgeous trappings of crimson and gold. After the customary salutations, we rode onwards in company until we reached the outer gates of his mansion, when he preceded us by a few steps, to give orders to his wives, who were taking an airing in the garden, to retire before our entrance. We were soon ushered into a kind of summer-house, handsomely and elegantly furnished, where our host introduced us to his brother, who conversed in English remarkably well. In imitation of our companions, we stretched ourselves on luxurious couches, not without casting glances of dismay at our thick English boots, which we had not dared to remove, knowing full well that our dusty, travel-soiled feet would ill bear scrutiny, or contrast favourably, in cleanliness or complexion, with those of our Moorish friends. Thus lazily reclining, we conversed comprehensibly, though not fluently, till refreshments, consisting of tea flavoured with verberna, and sweetmeats, were brought in and handed to us by dark black-eyed boys, with little clothing about their persons, but much decoration in the way of jewellery. Our tea was poured into cups of a conical shape and without handles, which

filtered into a support not unlike an egg-cup, and required no small dexterity to handle elegantly. Before our departure our host took us round his gardens, which were gay with flowers and fragrant with the odour of orange and lemon trees. On the top of the house we saw his wives congregated, smiling and kissing their hands to us—a piece of polite attention which their lord and master in no way attempted to resent.

From Tetuan we proceeded to Tangier, a ride easily accomplished in a day. No regular road connects the two places, but merely a mule track through an undulating country covered with low brushwood, which renders it, as the Spaniards are at present finding to their cost, peculiarly inconvenient for the manœuvring of troops. Tangier, from having had more intercourse with Europeans, has fewer marked national characteristics than Tetuan. It is the residence of the consular representatives of all the chief nations of Europe, and in connection with the Spanish Embassy there is a Roman Catholic chapel, the only Christian place of worship in the empire. The population has been variously computed, but it is probably from 10,000 to 12,000, the number of Jews being proportionately less than in Tetuan. In the houses, especially those of the consuls, there is a slight admixture of European architecture. The fortifications, though of a very rude description, are slightly armed with cannon, no two pieces of which appeared to us of the same size or make.

As a seaport, Tangier has long carried on an important and extensive trade with Gibraltar, the most noticeable item of traffic being beef, which is supplied by the Emperor of Morocco to the garrison of Gibraltar by contract with the British Government. Hence the interests of the British nation were deeply involved in the recent war, and necessitated the promise extracted by our Government at its commencement, that the Spaniards, in the event of their taking possession of Tangier or any of the other ports on the Barbary coast, should not hold them after the conclusion of the war, as the fortress of Gibraltar relies mainly on Tangier for supplies. Tangier once appertained to the British crown, being given as a dower to Princess Catherine on her marriage with Charles II; but in 1683 it was unfortunately abandoned by him as not being worth keeping up.

We took up our quarters at an inn kept by an Englishwoman, where we enjoyed all the comforts of an English hotel on African soil, and partook of that luxury, so rare out of England, good roast beef, in conjunction with the national dish of the Moors, *kouscousson*, a viand not unlike the frumenty of the west of England, and auguring a higher state of the culinary art than might have been expected from their general social condition.

A ride to Cape Spartel, and the lake and cave near it, proves an agreeable day's excursion from Tangier. A Roman bridge, situated a few miles out of the town, and the gardens of the various consuls, but more especially those of the Swedish and Danish consuls, also afforded favourite excursions; but these, alas! are probably now numbered with things gone by.

A SAILOR'S KNOT.

COMFORT COLLINS was a fine specimen of "a man before the mast." Being a skilled carver of soft wood, shaping it attractively for juvenile fancies, he rapidly became a favourite with the children, of whom we had a large number among our passengers. They called him "Mr. Collins the sailor," in order honourably to distinguish him from "Mr. Collins of the steerage," a crusty old gentleman, and by no means high in their esteem. So, during the dog-watches, this manly seaman fashioned toys and sea-stories for eager children. One group of children had a nursery-maid to attend them. Susan also listened with pleasure to Comfort Collins, as he spun his yarns and whittled the soft timber into varied fancies beneath his keen knife.

Facetious fo'castle men, observing these dog-watch meetings, determined to get up a little fun to help to beguile the monotony of the voyage. Slinger, a lad snatched from the vice of the metropolis, displayed much of the cunning attached to his earlier pursuits, whilst acting as messenger. A young sailor who had a fair education, and could wield a good pen, commenced a sham correspondence; and thus the combined machinations of this mischievous group of seamen put nonsense into the head and trouble into the heart of Comfort Collins.

Our ship's carpenter, a most jovial "old salt," was very deep in the conspiracy; but, assuming an air of ignorance, he sent a message one evening to my cabin, respectfully begging that I would "drop in on him" at my earliest convenience, as Comfort Collins was very anxious to meet me in his berth, to communicate something confidential. Prepared to give my best medical advice, I repaired to the carpenter's berth, where the following conversation ensued.

"Sir," says Comfort Collins, "I've taken the liberty of asking you to look in here, because, as a gentleman of some learning, you may be able to help me out of a bit of a tangle as I have slipped into. It's no ordinary clove-hitch, nor timber-noose, but a regular splicing-knot that's got unshipped, then twisted and tied, and again tied and twisted, till I'm fairly beaten. Look here, sir, and, if you know the law, tell me the law, and if you don't know the law, give me your own opinion, which I'll respect as the law upon a matter like this.

"When I came aboard this ship, I found a gang of children in the company; now, children always takes as natural to me as young monkeys do to cocoa-nuts. I also found a smartish young woman chartered as skipper of this juvenile crew. You know this young woman, sir; so I needn't say that she's good-looking, nor I ain't going to say she's bad-looking; but as we are cruising along, I'll just say that she was very pleasant company. So the children and her spends the dog-watches with me on the main-deck; and for a long time them dog-watches flies away like minutes. Perhaps, if the children hadn't been there, I should have spoken serious to her; but as they was, I went on t'other tack.

"She was always backing and filling like, never sailing steady; so I gets suspicious, and says to myself, 'Shake a reef out, lad, and give her the go-by!' You'll see my meaning, sir: I thought we'd better not sail in company; so I shook out a reef, when t'other craft did the same, sometimes sailing alongside, then standing off, then backing and filling, then squaring away and alongside again; still, with all her dodging and shifting, I didn't speak that craft. At last she was carried away clean out of sight, and word was brought for'ard that she was very ill."

Divesting the speech of Comfort Collins of such nautical idioms as he employed freely for its embellishment, he told me in great confidence, but with considerable excitement, of certain doubts he began to entertain, not only of his own prudence, but also of the intentions and designs of "t'other craft." He brought before me "strong lines in splendid hand-writing," as he termed them, but which he declared to be at once the root and essence of his folly. The main point of interest in the document ran as follows: "Don't imagine me to be penniless; for when I reach Sydney, I shall receive sixty and odd pounds, from my relations out there." He told me that, to his shame, this was the glittering bait by which he had been allured and caught, and by which he had brought upon himself the burden of a heavy responsibility.

Touching with manly feeling upon the illness whereby poor Susan had been so long detained from his gaze, he launched out in bitter words against our Tipperary steward, whom report had rendered more acceptable in the eyes of the fair one than himself; and went on to intimate that, annoyed by her apparent inconstancy, he had written to her in terms of upbraiding, and formally dissolved their acquaintanceship. To this letter he had received a reply which, to use his own expressive phrase, "fairly slewed" him; and the alarming purport of which may be judged by the postscript: "I'll spend the whole sixty odd pounds to get the law upon you—that I will!"

This terrible threat had filled the mind of poor Comfort Collins with consternation and dread, and it was with the view of obtaining my advice under these unpromising circumstances that he had sought an interview with me.

"Doctor Scalpel, I'll feel obliged by a few words from you, sir: if you'll be so good as to say how you'd act so situated yourself, it will be a lesson for me that I'd gladly learn."

Ignorant of the fact that this simple-minded seaman was in the hands of designing fo'castle men, who were extracting an unending entertainment from his angry denunciations of the treacherous female, who, he imagined, had beguiled him, I ventured a few words to this effect:—

"When you ask me to tell you the law of this question, you ask for that which I am unable to give you; but still, I think common sense will do a great deal to throw light upon it. According to your own statement, you made yourself agreeable to a young woman of whom you knew no more than a few weeks' company on board the same ship afforded. 'All goes gaily as the marriage bell,' until you imagine our Tipperary steward has taken

your position; so, with some anger and a good deal of jealousy, you decline to marry her. She naturally turns round in anger, not attaching so much importance to the idle speech of our Tipperary steward as yourself, and threatens you with the law. But it strikes me that, unless law is a cheaper luxury in the colony than at home, the vengeance with which you are threatened is a long way out of her reach. Thus I have given you as short and clear a view of the case as I can; but, as you wish me more particularly to say what course I should pursue if so situated, I'll tell you in a few words. You are not required to act upon it; but as you ask for it, I give it. I should go my way as though I had never written a line to her in my life; and, if I am not deceived in that woman's character, she would much prefer to let you go than to stand in an open court and make you tell all the world why you wouldn't marry her."

Although Comfort Collins did not like to hear that the law might yet reach him, he was so pleased with the way in which I put the question before him, and the mode of procedure suggested, that he insisted on shaking hands with me, and then with the carpenter; and so, coming round to me again, I left him in the grasp of the carpenter, and returned aft.

Next day, Chips, with mysterious preface and many apologies, informed me that Comfort Collins was the victim of a practical joke emanating from the fo'castle. Although much displeased at first, on consideration of the part I had played in it, I ultimately laughed most heartily. Susan had never penned a single line to Comfort Collins, and was profoundly ignorant of the part she had been called upon to personate. That, however, was known but to a select few, and the cool disdain and contempt with which the bold seaman, under threat of a "breach of promise action," treated poor Susan during the remainder of the voyage, rendered the affair as comical as serious.

The whole of this incident is perfectly true. I may add, that Susan did not become the wife of the Tipperary steward, although she entered the marriage state shortly after reaching the Australian shore. Comfort Collins left the "Pioneer" and joined the royal navy. When he heard the joke to which he had been sacrificed, he declared that he "could never put up with the banter of his old shipmates again," and so he for ever parted company with them.

PAPERS ON LIFE INSURANCE.

NO III.

LIFE INSURANCE TERMS EXPLAINED.

"Assurance" and "Insurance," as at present used, are nearly convertible terms, and the slight distinction which does exist between them is the result merely of affectation on the part of writers and speakers on the subject, and has no etymological or other reasonable basis. "Assurance" is the term now generally applied to simple life risks; to all other contingencies, of whatever nature, the term "insurance" is applied; so that we hear of "life

Assurance," but of fire, marine, casualty, hailstorm, cattle, railway, maritime, etc. "Insurance."

"Insurance" is no doubt the proper term; for, on turning up the word "assurance" in Johnson, we find it has twelve separate significations assigned to it, the last and remotest of its meanings being "insurance." Again, we have the high authority of Dr. Farr in favour of "insurance," on the ground that the operation is the same both where assurance and insurance are now used to describe it; and as "assurance" has already a distinct and appropriate meaning, he comes to the conclusion, naturally as we think, that "the phrase 'life Insurance' is in every respect preferable to 'life Assurance.'"

Now we come to the terms relating to the process of insurance, the parties concerned in it, the documents they use, and the acts they perform. In explaining the terms used, we shall show also, as far as possible, the formalities to be gone through in effecting an insurance.

The first person you are likely to see on the subject, particularly if residing in the provinces, will be the "Agent." Insurance agents are a class of persons who devote themselves wholly or partially to the procuring of business for the offices, for which they are variously remunerated. Some receive salary, some are paid by commission, and others receive a recompence for their services which includes both salary and commission. One of the most common rules is a commission of ten per cent. on the first year's premium and five per cent. on all future premiums; but though actuaries tell offices that they may safely expend the whole of their first year's premiums in procuring new business, larger allowances than these are often given, amounting in fact to thirty, forty, and fifty per cent. of the first year's premium. But these larger commissions are chiefly restricted to district managers, who have the superintendence of the agents of the locality in which they dwell. On the other hand, there are offices which have no agents, and allow no commission to any one; but these are the old-established offices, which have vast connections and a well-established reputation. They form the exception, and not the rule.

The agent gives you first a document called a "proposal form," which contains a series of questions relating to your age, health, and habits, to all of which you must answer with scrupulous fidelity, to the best of your knowledge, as the policy is issued on the faith of your answers being correct; and any wilful misrepresentation, if subsequently discovered by the office, may be made the ground of disputing the claim when your death shall occur. In addition to the "proposal form," there is a "medical certificate," in which the medical man reports the result of his examination. Two of your friends are also furnished with a series of questions called "friends' reports," and these they answer, in the strictest confidence.

The "proposal form," "medical certificate," and "friends' reports," are transmitted to the secretary of the office, and by him placed before the "board" at its next weekly meeting. The "board" consists of a number of shareholders, ranging from six to twenty-four, and averaging about twelve, who meet once a week to arrange the business of the office.

The board is often subdivided into committees, one of which attends to proposals, another to agency matters, a third to financial questions, and so on; in this way their labours as directors, when assembled at the board, are greatly facilitated by their previous exertions when subdivided into committees. With the board it remains to decide whether a proposal shall be accepted or rejected. If, however, the "proposal form," "medical certificate," and "friends' reports" are satisfactory, your acceptance is tolerably certain. If there be in any of these documents, however, facts or suggestions showing any likelihood that your life will not be one of the average duration of persons at your age, you will in some offices be rejected; in others you will be accepted conditionally; that is to say, the "actuary" will be called upon to state what "addition" shall be made to your age, in order to make your proposal fair to the office, after the medical officer has reported; in other words, if you have had any serious illness, the actuary, in conjunction with the medical adviser, will perhaps recommend the board to take your proposal, but they may say that, owing to the circumstances detailed in the reports with respect to your health, occupation, or habits, it would be only just to "add" five years to your life. By this it is meant that, owing to your illness, to your hazardous occupation, or to some other circumstance, you ought to pay the premium ordinarily charged to persons at twenty-five, although you may be but twenty years of age. This, however, it is but just to remark, is a very rare case, where the life appears to be a healthy one, although common enough with lives which are somewhat doubtful. "Diseased lives," as they are called, were long declined by all the offices; but now, such is the progress which science has made in this direction, that rates have been provided by which persons suffering from all the ordinary ailments may be insured by paying a proportionate premium.

The "policy" is the document which constitutes the contract between the office on the one hand and the insured upon the other.

The manager of the office is sometimes simply called "the manager," at others he is designated "secretary." Some are known as "managing directors," when, in addition to their executive and official functions, they have also a seat at the board. A secretary sometimes unites with those duties the functions of an "actuary." The secretary and board are intent on getting business; it is for the actuary to see that the rates are adequate in special cases, and to determine all questions which involve mathematical calculations. Many secretaries make no pretensions to anything beyond a general knowledge of this part of the business; and most offices, especially where their transactions are extensive, have both an actuary and a secretary. One of the duties of an actuary is the apportionment of bonuses amongst the persons insured, according to the duration and amount of their policies. He has also to report periodically upon the general condition of the company's affairs, and to make valuations of its assets and liabilities, when called upon to do so. The leading actuaries, some years ago, resolved themselves into an "institute," to which most of

the gentlemen engaged in that capacity now belong. It is an institution which takes its place with our "learned societies." It is laudable in its objects, beneficial in its operations, and calculated to aid most materially in the development of the science of insurance.

By the "assignment" of policies is meant the transference of the interest of the person assured to some other person, for a consideration. As, for example, you have a policy on your life for £500, and, wanting money at a certain period, you "transfer," or "assign," that policy, and all interest therein, to another party; and this transfer or assignment is duly registered at the office of the company issuing the policy. Assigned policies possess peculiar privileges. Your policy is generally void if you die by duelling, by suicide, or by the hands of justice; but if that policy is duly "assigned," the holder of it can, in most cases, recover under any circumstances, even if you should come to an untimely end by either of the three processes to which we have alluded. Life policies, in this way, become very valuable and negotiable securities.

By "insurable interest" is meant that you must have some pecuniary interest in the life of any party whom you may seek to insure, and unless this insurable interest be clearly established, your policy, even if otherwise duly effected, is invalid.

Promptitude in periodical premium payments is also required. For instance, if your premium is payable on the 31st day of December in each year, and you do not pay it on or before that day, the policy is "lapsed," and therefore void. But the generality of offices allow you to go on for thirty days longer without forfeiting your policy, and those days are known as "days of grace." When the death of the person assured takes place, his policy becomes a "claim," and the money is usually paid within three months, and in some cases at the expiration of two months. Most offices pay the money immediately on "proof of death," or very shortly thereafter, deducting only a reasonable interest upon the amount of the claim, for the interval between the period at which it is paid and the end of the three months, or whatever the time specified on the policy may be.

The "probability of life," or "expectancy," as it is sometimes called, is the average length of time which persons of a given age are found to live, and the "present value" of a policy is the sum which, improved at compound interest, will amount to the sum named in the policy at the end of the "expectancy" of the person insured.

"Proof of age" is a point which should always be attended to by the policy-holder at the earliest possible period. A certified extract from a family Bible, or the testimony of some person who remembers the event, are held valid; and on this, or some other evidence satisfactory to the office, being tendered and accepted, the office indorses the policy "Age admitted," and thus prevents any dispute on that score. This is often a work of comparative ease during the life of the policy-holder; but it is not unfrequently attended with inconvenience and expense, if put off till the insured has died.

"Proof of death" is ordinarily a work of but very

little difficulty, and should be commenced as early as possible after the death has taken place. The first step is to notify to the office the fact of the death, together with such particulars as to cause, time, place, and manner, as the circumstances may suggest. The "proofs" will, of course, include a certificate from the medical man or other person attending the deceased, with certificate of burial, evidence of identity, and particulars as to the will of the deceased, or other proofs of the interest of the party claiming the proceeds of the policy. If the "proof of age" has been left unattended to, it will be perhaps a tedious and expensive process, as advertisements will have to be issued, and parochial registers searched.

After a policy has been in force some years, the offices frequently will give what is called its "surrender value," if it is desirable to discontinue it. The premiums which have been paid have included, each year, not only a portion to cover the current risk of the insured dying within the year, which of course is taken of right by the office, but a portion to go towards meeting the future risks was also included; and the latter will be given back on the policy being cancelled. The "surrender value" of policies is, however, different in the various offices. Some give little or nothing, while one or two recent offices on the plan of Dr. Farr, return nearly 50 per cent. of the premiums paid, at any time after the issue of the policy. "Renewal notices" are documents issued to policy-holders, apprising them of the date on which their next, or "renewal" premium, becomes due.

Offices are of three kinds—"mixed," "mutual," and "proprietary." A mutual office is one in which the policy-holders alone are concerned, and by their premiums furnish the funds to pay all expenses and to meet claims as they arise. The "proprietary" system has now only two or three representatives amongst the offices; on this plan the shareholders furnish a capital to meet expenses and to guarantee claims, and take the profits as interest on their capital subscribed. But what seems the most popular system is the "mixed" principle, which unites both the "mutual" and the "proprietary," combining a body of shareholders who have subscribed a fund to meet the expenses, and to guarantee claims as they arise, on which they take interest out of profits, and yet allow a proportion of the profits to be divided *pro rata* amongst the policy-holders. These profits are often considerable for both parties, as will be seen from the fact that one of the offices, though giving liberally of its profits to the policy-holders, and paying good interest to shareholders, is selling its shares upon which only 10s. was originally paid up, for sums varying from £7 10s. to £8 15s.; and this, though no doubt an extreme, is by no means a solitary instance. The "bonus additions" to policies have often mounted to cent. per cent. where they have been a long time in force.

We have thus briefly, but we hope clearly, explained the signification of the leading terms in use: for the minuter details, we must refer our readers to insurance agents and other officials, and to writers on the subject.

VARIETIES.

OBAN.—Its population is 1700; its inhabited houses, 156; the annual value of its property £4400. Often, in the height of the season, 500 or 600 beds are occupied by tourists, and the nightly average, from the beginning of June to the end of September, is 250, which, making allowance for the number of beds occupied by more than one person, represents at least 300 guests. Each of these is ascertained to pay on an average, 10s. per day, besides the hire of conveyances, and the large proportion of the eating and drinking performed on board the steamers. As the number of the tourists sleeping in the place during the season is at least 40,000, we have thus, in four months, a sum of £20,000 of Lowland money spent in this little village.

A POOR MILLIONAIRE.—Although rich beyond the dreams of avarice, James Morrison for a long time was fully impressed with the idea that he was a poor man, who had to live upon the humble rate of earnings of his early life. So strong was this delusion, that for years he was in the habit of calling for and receiving a pound a-week as his wages, on which he believed he had to live! This was probably the amount he received when a light porter in Tod's warehouse, in Fore Street.

ENORMOUS DISTANCES OF THE STARS.—The only mode we have of conceiving such intervals at all, is the time which it would require for light to traverse them. Now light, as we know, travels at the rate of 192,000 miles per second. It would therefore occupy 100,000,000 seconds, or upwards of three years, in such a journey, at the very lowest estimate. What, then, are we to allow for the distance of those innumerable stars of the smaller magnitudes, which the telescope discloses to us? If we admit the light of a star of each magnitude to be half that of the magnitude next above it, it will follow that a star of the first magnitude will require to be removed to 362 times its distance, to appear no larger than one of the sixteenth. It follows, therefore, that among the countless multitudes of such stars, visible in telescopes, there must be many whose light has taken a thousand years to reach us; and that, when we observe their places, and note their changes, we are, in fact, reading only *their history of a thousand years'* date, thus wonderfully recorded!—*Sir W. Herschel.*

THE ROMAN WALL.—We can hardly imagine that such formidable ramparts, if defended by the disciplined bands of Hadrian or Severus, could have been so repeatedly broken through by half-armed barbarians. But when the Roman arms were finally withdrawn, no strength of natural or artificial defences could avail for the protection of the timid and helpless natives. The wall was speedily penetrated, and from the middle of the fifth century it ceased to afford any shelter to the southern province, which was quickly overrun, its stations stormed, its treasures ransacked, its populations decimated. Coins of Diocletian have been found in great numbers as far north as Fort Augustus; coins of Constantine at Edinburgh, and many other places in the Lowlands; coins down to Honorius (413) on the line of the Antonine Vallum. But from this period all such indications of Roman occupation cease, both to the north and south of the Tyne and Solway. The civilization of Italy was swept away from the Northumbrian isthmus; the strong places on the wall were occupied by the chiefs of the clans, and held, no doubt, one against another; just as the palaces of Rome itself were converted by the barons of the middle ages into private fortresses. To the Pictish chief succeeded the moss-trooper, who stalled his stolen herds in the guardrooms of the Roman centurion; and the moss-trooper has been in these latter days supplanted by the Northumbrian farmer, who has stripped wall and camps of their stones, and fenced his fields with the spoil.—*Quarterly Review.*

THE DOOM OF THE WORLD.—What this change is to be, we dare not even conjecture; but we see in the heavens themselves some traces of destructive elements, and some indications of their power. The fragments of broken planets, the descent of meteoric stones upon our globe, the wheeling comets, welding their loose materials at the solar furnace, the volcanic eruptions in our own satellite, the appearance of new stars, and the disappearance of others, are all foreshadows of that impending convulsion to which the system of the world is doomed. Thus placed on a planet which is to be burned up, and under heavens which are to pass away; thus reading, as it were, on the cemeteries, and dwelling upon the mausoleums of former worlds, let us learn the lesson of humility and wisdom, if we have not already been taught in the school of revelation.—*North British Review.*

SELF-KNOWLEDGE.—O what a change it would make in the world, if men were brought to the knowledge of themselves! How many would weep, that now laugh, and live in mirth and pleasure! How many would lament their sin and misery, that now are pharisaically confident of their integrity! How many would seek to faithful ministers for advice, and inquire what they should do to be saved, that now deride them, and scorn their counsel, and cannot bear their plain reproof, or come not near them! How many would ask directions for the cure of their unbelief, and pride, and sensuality, that now take little notice of any such sins within them! How many would cry day and night for mercy, and beg importunately for the life of their immortal souls, that now take up with a few words of course, instead of serious, fervent prayer! Do but once know yourselves aright, know what you are, and what you have done, and what is your danger; and then be prayerless and careless if you can; then but trifle out your time, and make a jest of holy diligence, and put God off with lifeless words and compliments, if you can. Men could not think so lightly and contemptuously of Christ, so unworthily and falsely of a holy life, so delightfully of sin, so carelessly of duty, so fearlessly of hell, so senselessly and atheistically of God, and so disregardfully of heaven as they now do, if they did but thoroughly know themselves.—*Baxter.*

ECONOMY IN DOMESTIC FIRES.—I have, for years, materially reduced the consumption of coals in the fire-places in my house by putting fire-clay over the bottom bars. It is introduced in a moist state, is moulded in any form, and lasts for years. I have it placed in a sloping form, like the roof of a house, in which shape it fills up the bottom and back of the fire, where it cannot be seen when the coals are in the grate. By this contrivance, a very small quantity of coals is made to produce, apparently, a large fire, and the mass of clay becomes red-hot, and throws a great heat into the room.—*Builder.*

THE SAILOR'S BIBLE.—The following transcript from the fly-leaf of a brave officer's Bible tells a simple tale of the dangers of a seaman's life, and the source of his confidence in the hour of his greatest trial, whether battling with the elements or his country's foe. It is as follows:—
"This Bible was presented to me by Mr. Raikes, at the town of Hertford, January, 1781, as a reward for my punctual attendance at the Sunday school, and good behaviour when there. And after being my companion fifty-three years, forty-one of which I spent in the sea service, during which time I was in forty-five engagements, received thirteen wounds, was three times shipwrecked, once burnt out, twice capsized in a boat, and had fevers of different sorts fifteen times, this Bible was my consolation; and was newly bound for me by James Bishop, of Edinburgh, on the 26th of October, 1834, the day I completed the sixtieth year of my age, as witness my hand."—*Deeds of Naval Daring.*